

Message Text

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FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 2682 ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN BEIRUT
BUCHAREST CAIRO DAKAR DAMASCUS JAKARTA JERUSALEM JIDDA TEL AVIV
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QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 2682

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: WHO

SUBJ: ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUE IN WHO

REF: (A) 76 GENEVA 3843 (NOTAL)

(B) GENEVA 1285 (NOTAL) (C) TEL AVIV 1419 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. THE STAGE APPEARS SET FOR A RENEWED ARAB-
ISRAELI CONFRONTATION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY IN
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MAY OVER THE QUESTION OF HEALTH CONDITIONS IN THE
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WITH THE LONG-RANGE ARAB GOAL
CONTINUING TO BE THE SUSPENSION OF ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP
IN WHO. PRESENT STAGE SETTINGS AND STATE OF PLAY ARE
DISCUSSED BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. AMONG SPRING'S PERENNIALS HAS BEEN THE REGENERATION

EACH MAY OF AN ARAB-ISRAELI CONFRONTATION IN THE ANNUAL WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO). THE ASSEMBLY WILL OPEN THIS YEAR ON MAY 2 AND LAST ABOUT THREE WEEKS. THE FOCI FOR THE ARAB CHARGES IN WHO ARE "HEALTH CONDITIONS OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES" AND "HEALTH ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST." THE LONG-RANGE ARAB AIMS HAVE BEEN (A) INVOCATION OF THE WHO CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION WHEREBY ISRAEL MIGHT BE "SUSPENDED" FROM THE ORGANIZATION, AND (B) WHO COLLABORATION WITH THE PLO. ARAB TACTICS MISFIRED A YEAR AGO (REF A), AND AS A CONSEQUENCE ARAB REPRESENTATIVES WITH THE WILLING SUPPORT OF MOST OF THE GROUP OF 77 PROMPTLY PUSHED THROUGH AT THAT ASSEMBLY A TOUCH NEW DIRECTIVE TO THE PREVIOUSLY CONSTITUTED SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS (A SENEGALESE, AN INDONESIAN AND A ROMANIAN MEDICAL OFFICIAL) TO STUDY HEALTH CONDITIONS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES BUT, THIS TIME, "IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH THE STATES DIRECTLY CONCERNED AND THE PLO."

2. LITTLE HAS HAPPENED DURING THE ENSUING YEAR BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTIES IN RE-CONSTITUTING THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS IN VIEW OF THE EMBARRASMENTS OF LAST YEAR, BUT THIS FINALLY WAS ACHIEVED IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR (REF B). DR. WONE, THE FORMER SENEGALESE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE WHOSE REPORT FRUSTRATED ARAB INTERESTS A YEAR AGO, WAS REPLACED AS CHAIRMAN BY ANOTHER SENEGALESE, DR. FODE WADE. THE INDONESIAN MEMBER WAS REPLACED BY DR. MOELJONO TRASTOTENOJO. ONLY THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ROMANIAN MEMBER, DR. TRAIAN IONESCU, REMAINED.

3. THIS SLOW PACE HAS SUITED ISRAELI STRATEGY WHICH, AS DESCRIBED TO US BY THE ISRAELI MISSION, IS TO SPIN OUT THE PROCESS OF AGREEING ON ARRANGEMENTS FOR A GROUP OF EXPERTS' VISIT IN A WAY WHICH, WHILE PUTTING OFF ANY VISIT, STILL CLEARS ISRAEL OF THE SORT OF CHARGES WHICH COULD MUSTER SUPPORT FOR A "SUSPENSION" RESOLUTION. THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS AS WE KNOW THEM TRACKS WITH THOSE REPORTED BY EMBASSY TEL AVIV (REF C). NOT UNTIL LAST JANUARY DID THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS GET AROUND TO MEETING AND SENDING A REQUEST TO ISRAEL (IN A LETTER DATED JANUARY 12) TO FIX ARRANGEMENTS FOR A VISIT TO THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. ISRAELI AUTHORITIES TOOK A "REASONABLE" TWO MONTHS BEFORE REPLYING, AND THE MEETING THEREAFTER TOOK PLACE APRIL 5-6 IN GENEVA. ISRAEL WAS REPRESENTED AT THE MEETING BY PROFESSOR MENCZEL, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF HEALTH, AND THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS BY IONESCU (SITTING IN FOR WADE).

PRESENT ALSO WAS WHO DEPUTY LEGAL ADVISOR VIGNE, WHO SERVES AS SECRETARY TO THE COMMITTEE.

4. ACCORDING TO VIGNES AND AN ISRAELI SOURCE PRESENT AT THE MEETING, IONESCU OUTLINED THE REQUIREMENTS ON THE STUDIES THE COMMITTEE BELIEVED IT HAD BEEN DIRECTED TO CONDUCT UNDER THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE LAST ASSEMBLY, WHILE VOLUNTEERING SOMEWHAT UNCOMFORTABLY THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO PASS JUDGMENT ON HEALTH CONDITIONS AS THERE ARE NO AGREED WHO STANDARDS TO MEASURE OBSERVATIONS AGAINST. HE LEFT THE IMPRESSION WITH THE ISRAELIS, HOWEVER, OF A MAN WHO HAD RECEIVED HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

5. THE ISSUE IMMEDIATELY BECAME ONE OF THE TIMING AND MODALITIES OF A COMMITTEE VISIT. (THE JUSTIFICATION A YEAR AGO FOR REJECTING THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT HAD BEEN THAT THE COMMITTEE "AS SUCH", E.G., AS A WHOLE, HAD NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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VISITED THE TERRITORIES.) ISRAELI AMBASSADOR MERON INTERVENED AT THIS STAGE IN THE MEETING TO MAKE THE POINT THAT, AFTER ALMOST A YEAR OF DELAY, THE ISRAELI ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND ISRAELI PUBLIC OPINION HAD TO BE RECOGNIZED NOW AS CRITICAL FACTORS IN A REQUEST TO VISIT THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES DURING THE FEW WEEKS REMAINING BEFORE THE NEXT WHO ASSEMBLY.

6. THE ISRAELI SIDE WAS VERY CAREFUL, HOWEVER, NOT TO TURN DOWN IN PRINCIPLE THE IDEA OF A VISIT BY THE COMMITTEE "AS SUCH", AND TO PRESS ONLY FOR UNDERSTANDING ON THE QUESTION OF TIMING. THE ISRAELI SIDE IS PROMOTING THE IDEA OF AN "INTERIM" REPORT BY THE COMMITTEE TO THE MAY ASSEMBLY, AND THE POSTPONEMENT OF A "FINAL" REPORT. VIGNES SEES NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE REPORT TO THE NEXT ASSEMBLY BEING AN "INTERIM" REPORT, BUT PERSONALLY ANTICIPATES A SERIOUS CONFRONTATION AT THE ASSEMBLY. HE APPEARS TO HAVE ACQUIRED THIS EXPECTATION FROM INQUIRIES HE RECEIVED WHILE ACCOMPANYING THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ON VISITS DURING MARCH TO EGYPT, SYRIA AND JORDAN. (THE COMMITTEE'S VISIT TO LEBANON HAD TO BE CANCELLED IN VIEW OF THE SITUATION THERE.) SORENSON.
UNQUOTE VANCE.

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